



## NAVY SURGEON GENERAL TESTIFIES BEFORE THE U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

*Editor's note: Vice Adm. Forrest Faison, Navy surgeon general and chief, U.S. Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, provided the following opening remarks to the U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Defense, during a hearing April 3 on the Fiscal Year 2020 budget request for the Defense Health Program. Remarks as prepared by Vice Adm. Forrest Faison.*

Chairman Shelby, Vice Chairman Durbin, distinguished members of the subcommittee, it is my honor to be with you today. My message this morning is straightforward: The operational tempo and global commitments of America's Navy and Marine Corps remains high – Sailors and Marines are deployed and operating forward around the world. The Navy Medicine team is with them, working tirelessly to protect their health and readiness. On behalf of these dedicated women and men, thank you for your confidence and support.

My written statement provides you more details, but I want to highlight 3 key areas: Readiness; transformation; and our people.

**Readiness:** We have no greater responsibility than providing medical forces that are ready, prepared and present to save lives of the nation's armed forces. Every Sailor and Marine, and their families, are depending on us to do all in our power to provide the best care our nation can offer and return their loved ones home safely and alive. To honor this trust, we are continuing to develop new and improved

capabilities to support the full range of operations today. These efforts are critical since we know that disaggregated operations pose unique challenges for timely access to life saving resuscitation and surgery.

Integral to advancing our expeditionary combat casualty care capabilities is ensuring our medical personnel sustain their clinical readiness skills. We are making solid progress implementing our Navy Medicine trauma strategy: In July 2018, our Naval Medical Center Camp Lejeune earned American College of Surgeons' accreditation as a Level III trauma center where the staff is now gaining valuable trauma experience while providing a valuable service to community. We expanded our successful Hospital Corpsman Trauma Training course partnerships with Stroger Hospital trauma center in Chicago to the University of Florida Health Jacksonville and anticipate adding other sites this year. We continue to embed our provider teams at LA County to get important trauma training experience.

**Bottomline: These efforts are preparing us for the next fight.**

**Transformation:** Reform efforts continue within the Military Health System. The Department of the Navy is in full support of these, including the transfer of administration and management of Military Treatment Facilities to the DHA as required by recent NDAA acts. This legislation has reshaped military medicine to best support the warfighter while improving the health care delivery system with greater standardization and consistency. Our leadership recognizes that both the Services and the DHA must be successful in executing their responsibilities. For us, this transition represents an opportunity to laser focus exclusively on the readiness of sailors and marines. This is especially critical as we return to competition between great powers and the reality that future conflicts will present challenges to combat casualty care and survival not seen in the recent past. These reforms are allowing us to establish our organizational constructs to support readiness requirements while sustaining our critical responsibilities to man, train and equip our forces. A key component moving forward will be to ensure that Navy Medicine is resourced to meet our Services' – Navy and Marine Corps – authorities, responsibilities and readiness missions.

**Our team:** Nothing is more critical to our mission readiness than the Navy Medicine team – dedicated and talented men and women serving world-wide. A key priority for us is our human capital strategy – both military and civilian personnel – to ensure we have the proper mix of professionals that are trained, organized and equipped to execute their responsibilities. This focus requires an emphasis on talent management at all levels, as well as recruiting and retaining the best and brightest. Navy Medicine is grateful for your support of our resources requirements needed for accession and retention incentives, particularly for many of our high demand wartime critical specialties.

In closing, our commitment to you is that we will never waiver from our obligation to be ready to save the lives of those entrusted to our care. I am proud of the Navy Medicine team and remain appreciative of

your strong support.

I look forward to your questions.